



## Guidance on Rates of Pay for Singing for Health Leaders in Scotland, Musicians' Union

Scotland's Singing for Health Network is very aware of the disparity in pay for those working with arts and health organisations and/or running their own singing for health groups. We are also aware that guidance on rates is variable across unions and does not reflect the nuanced work of a singing for health practitioner. We have worked with the Musicians' Union to prepare guidance on fair pay for singing for health practitioners. Such guidance has been prepared in consultation with arts and health organisations in Scotland, community music and singing for health practitioners, and considering recommendations from the Musicians' Union, Scottish Artists Union, and the Independent Society of Musicians.

### Rates of Pay 2025-2026

Recommendations for rates of pay listed below are for 2025-26. In line with current guidance from the [Musicians' Union](#), at least a 6% increase to rates should be applied each year due to inflation.

£30.60 per hour for a new practitioner (within 2 years of commencing work within the singing for health field)\*

£38.20 per hour for a practitioner with +3 years' experience\*

£47.70 per hour for a practitioner with +5 years' experience\*

\*These rates are calculated at an approximate 10.5% increase for each year of experience gained, recognising that practitioners will develop their experience through their work, reflection, engaging in continuous professional development, and training. Experience can be evidenced by a professional CV.

These practitioner rates are recommended minimums and should be used as a starting point for negotiations. These rates do not account for preparation or travel beyond a reasonable commute (discussed below).

### Preparation time

For every 1 hour of contact time, we recommend that 1-2 hours of preparation time for the session should be paid at the same rates listed above. For example, if a practitioner with 5+

years' experience is leading a 2-hour session, then their total payment is £95.40 (2 hours contact time) + £95.40-£143.10 (2-3 hours preparation time) = £190.80-£238.40.

Any additional work related to the singing for health group / arts and health organisation, such as administrative work and/or attending meetings, should also be paid, and rates negotiated (discussed below).

### Travel

We recommend that travel expenses beyond a 60-minute commuting\*\* time should be paid in line with [HMRC](#) recommendations i.e. 45p per mile or best value public transport fares. Practitioners should keep in mind that travel expenses are tax deductible.

\*\*According to [Transport Statistics Great Britain: 2022 Domestic Travel](#) and research conducted by [Strutt & Parker](#), the average time for commuting is between 27-63 minutes. As such, we define a reasonable commute as approximately 60 minutes.

### Practitioners leading their own singing for health groups

We recognise practitioners will have different responsibilities depending on whether they are running their own groups or working for arts and health organisations. For example, practitioners running their own singing for health groups will likely, in addition to preparing and leading the groups musical activities, be responsible for advertising, arranging the space to deliver the session, setting up and breaking down the space, evaluation, fundraising, forming and maintaining partnerships, insurance, union membership, risk assessments, safeguarding, and many other tasks.

We recommend that the role and responsibilities of the singing for health practitioner be made explicit in any funding application and appropriately costed.

### Practitioners working with arts and health organisations

We recognise that practitioners working for an arts and health organisation may be expected to attend training, meetings, report to an activities co-ordinator, write reports, and spend time reflecting on their work. For practitioners new to the organisation, there may also be a probationary period, where they will shadow those who have been delivering activities. Rates of pay during this period may be lower than recommendations.

We recommend that organisations establish a contract with the practitioner that explicitly outlines their role and responsibilities. The role and responsibilities and rate of pay should be reviewed annually with the practitioner, with rates increased in line with [living wage inflation](#). Furthermore, when preparing funding applications, we recommend that organisations approach practitioners when writing the application to discuss roles, responsibilities, and appropriate rates of pay.

If a freelancer is invited to attend a meeting and/or training session, they should be paid to attend at a negotiated rate.

### Further guidance

The guidance and rates of pay are recommendations, and all practitioners are free to negotiate higher rates. We encourage all singing for health practitioners and arts and health organisations who wish to engage singing for health practitioners to make use of this information.